Employee Info & Handbook

Employee Directory

Team

Name	Birthdate	Contact Email	Department	Employment Type	Hire Date	Phone Number	@
Michael Slusher		michael@slusherstudio.com	Creative Leadership		@February 23, 2024	678-906-9096	inf
Zachary Ford		zachary@slusherstudio.com	Creative Leadership		@January 24, 2025	478-973-8697	za
Kendall Hughes		contact@slusherstudio.com	Admin Marketing	Part-Time	@January 21, 2025		ke
Aaron Gibbes	@February 15, 1999	aaron@alphatropicmedia.com	Creative Video	Contractor	@January 26, 2025	561-475-6959	aa
Rachel Ussery				Contractor	@January 26, 2025		
Andrew Cook	@December 10, 2000		Admin Creative	Part-Time	@April 7, 2025		

Employee Handbook

Overview

▼ Mission Statement

Slusher Studio LLC doing business as Rocket Launch Studio is a full-service creative media company dedicated to delivering striking, polished, and professional photo and video content. Our mission is to provide dynamic creative solutions that help our clients stand out and authentically reflect their unique identities.

▼ Core Values

Creativity

Bold, adaptable, and timeless visuals. That help convey a client best with personality.

Professionalism

High standards in every project.

Collaboration

Strong partnerships with clients and creatives.

Growth

Commitment to continuous improvement and innovation.

Support

Creating an environment where team members feel heard and valued.

Getting Started
▼ Onboarding Information

1. **Onboarding Meeting**

   - All new hires will have an onboarding meeting with leadership.
   - During this meeting, we'll cover:
     - An overview of your role and responsibilities.
     - Expectations for projects, communication, and timelines.
     - A review of key tools and resources you'll need to get started.

2. **Connection to Tools and Systems**

   - You will be connected to:
     - **QuickBooks**: For payment tracking and invoicing, if applicable to your role.
     - **Slack**: Our primary communication platform where you'll join relevant channels to stay informed.
     - **Shared Drives**: Access to shared project files or resources, such as Google Drive or Notion, based on your role.

3. **Studio Gear and Swag**

   - You'll receive a **studio shirt and hat** to represent the team during shoots and events.

4. **Provide Personal Details**

   - We'll ask you to submit:
     - A **professional headshot** for our Employee Directory.
     - A short **bio** (2-3 sentences) highlighting your skills and role in the studio.

5. **Sign Contract and Documents**

   - You will sign a contract outlining your role, responsibilities, and any specific agreements (e.g., NDAs, project scope).
   - We'll review any additional policies relevant to your position, such as time-off procedures, late policies, or social media guidelines.

6. **Training and Familiarization**

   - Depending on your role, you may:
     - Receive an overview of our workflow (e.g., how shoots are planned, how deliverables are submitted).
     - Be paired with a team member for guidance on specific tools, processes, or software.
     - Complete a walkthrough of client communication procedures if applicable (e.g., marketing outreach).

7. **Welcome to the Team**

   - After onboarding, you'll be formally introduced to the team via Slack, and your headshot and bio will be added to the Employee Directory.

Behavior and Conduct

▼ Conduct Policy

Rocket Launch Studio expects every employee to maintain a high standard of professionalism and respect in all work-related settings, whether working from home, in the studio, or on location with clients. The following guidelines outline our expectations and the procedures for addressing any conduct-related issues.

1. Professional Appearance and Attire

1. **Remote/Work-From-Home**:

   - There is no strict uniform when working from home; however, attire must be non-offensive and presentable during video calls or virtual meetings.

2. **On-Location Shoots**:

   - Employees are required to wear **Rocket Launch Studio branded shirts, jackets, or other approved items**.
   - Clothing should be free from tears, stains, or excessive wrinkles.
   - **Closed-toed shoes** are mandatory on set for safety.

2. Workplace Behavior and Etiquette

1. **Professional Attitude**:

   - Always conduct yourself in a courteous and respectful manner with clients, colleagues, and contractors.
   - Strive to be helpful, attentive, and solution-focused, regardless of personal differences or conflicts.

2. **No "Shop Talk" or Negative Comments**:

   - Speaking poorly about a client or complaining about a job while on set or in a client's presence is strictly prohibited.
   - If you have concerns or frustrations, **contact leadership privately** rather than venting publicly.

3. **Focus and Readiness**:

   - When clocked in or on a job, you are expected to be fully attentive and ready to work.
   - Avoid personal distractions (e.g., excessive phone use unrelated to the job) that interfere with your duties.

3. Harassment and Misconduct

1. **Zero Tolerance Policy**:

   - Harassment, discrimination, or sexual misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical, and visual harassment related to a person's race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or any other protected characteristic.

2. **Reporting Harassment**:

   - If you experience or witness any harassment, discrimination, or other misconduct, **contact leadership immediately**.
   - If you feel unsafe or believe you are being harassed by a fellow team member, respectfully ask the behavior to stop (if safe to do so) and notify leadership as soon as possible.

3. **Response to Reports**:

   - All reports of harassment or misconduct will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

- Leadership may meet privately with the parties involved to determine an appropriate resolution.

4. Safety and Well-Being

1. **Feeling Unsafe**:
   - If you ever feel unsafe, discriminated against, or unable to continue working, **contact leadership immediately**.

2. **Stress or Personal Concerns**:
   - We understand life can be stressful. If you need support or accommodations, please speak to your supervisor or HR so we can discuss potential solutions.

5. Disciplinary Procedures

1. **Strikes and Termination**:
   - Generally, Rocket Launch Studio operates on a **three-strike system** for most conduct issues. Leadership will document each offense, and repeated violations may lead to termination.
   - Certain serious offenses—such as harassment, sexual misconduct, or substance use on the job—may result in **immediate termination**, bypassing the three-strike process.

2. **Client Feedback**:
   - Negative client feedback directly harms the company's reputation. Should you give clients a reason to feel disrespected or dissatisfied, it will be taken seriously and could result in disciplinary measures.

3. **Removal from a Job**:
   - If conduct is an issue on-site, leadership or the on-site supervisor may **ask you to step aside or release you from the job** immediately.

6. Reporting and Resolution

1. **How to Report**:
   - Any employee who observes or experiences behavior contrary to this policy should promptly report it to a supervisor, the HR department, or a member of leadership.

2. **Investigation Process**:
   - Leadership will assess the situation, which may include speaking with relevant parties privately to determine the next steps.

3. **Resolution**:
   - Depending on the nature and severity of the issue, disciplinary measures can range from a verbal or written warning to suspension or termination.

▼ Conflict Resolution Policy

At Rocket Launch Studio, we are committed to maintaining a positive, collaborative work environment. We recognize that conflicts can arise at any level, including with leadership, and are best resolved through clear communication and mutual understanding. This policy outlines the steps to address and resolve conflicts effectively.

Steps for Resolving Conflicts

1. **Direct Communication**:
   - If you have a conflict with a peer or leadership, you are encouraged to address the issue directly if you feel comfortable. Often, open and honest communication can resolve misunderstandings quickly.

2. **Involving Leadership for Peer Conflicts**:

- If the issue involves a peer and isn't resolved directly, bring it to the attention of your supervisor (Michael or Zachary).

3. **Addressing Conflicts with Leadership**:
    - If your concern involves leadership (e.g., the CEO or COO), you can:
        - **Request a neutral mediator** within the team to facilitate a discussion.
        - **Utilize the anonymous feedback form** to raise concerns without revealing your identity.
        - **Propose involving a third-party mediator** (e.g., an HR consultant or trusted external advisor) for particularly sensitive or complex situations.

4. **Anonymous Reporting**:
    - If you are uncomfortable raising the issue directly, you can use the anonymous feedback form to report the problem. While anonymity limits follow-up, we'll review concerns carefully and act as appropriate.

5. **Mediation**:
    - For persistent or complex conflicts, a mediated conversation may be arranged to ensure all parties feel heard and a resolution is reached.

Key Principles

- **Respect and Professionalism**: Treat all team members, including leadership, with respect, even during disagreements. Focus on solutions rather than placing blame.
- **Timeliness**: Address issues promptly to prevent escalation or misunderstandings.
- **Confidentiality**: Conflicts will be handled discreetly to protect the privacy of those involved.

Assurance of Fairness

We are committed to creating a culture where employees feel safe and supported in voicing concerns. Leadership is held to the same standards of respect and professionalism as all team members, and we will address any concerns involving leadership with objectivity and care.

▼ Social Media Guidelines

At Rocket Launch Studio, we encourage employees to share behind-the-scenes content and engage with our projects on social media. However, maintaining professionalism and protecting our brand integrity is essential. The following guidelines ensure a balance between creativity, transparency, and respect for our clients, team, and company.

What We Encourage

- **Behind-the-Scenes Sharing**: Feel free to share moments from the studio, events, or shoots that highlight the creative process.
- **Collaborative Content**: Share behind-the-scenes photos and videos with the team so we can repost them on Slusher Studio's official accounts.
- **Tagging and Crediting**: Tag the official Slusher Studio account and, when appropriate, credit team members involved in the work.

What to Avoid

1. **Confidentiality and Trade Secrets**:
    - Do not share client work, sensitive details, or studio workflows that are not yet public or intended to remain confidential.
    - Some projects may have stricter social media rules; follow any specific instructions provided.

2. **Location Privacy**:

- Avoid revealing shoot locations, client names, or other identifiable details before official content has been posted or cleared for release.

3. **Professional Representation**:

    - Refrain from posting content that misrepresents or diminishes the value of Slusher Studio.

    - Avoid using language or images that could harm the company's reputation or relationships with clients.

4. **Disparaging the Company**:

    - On personal time, what you post is your business, but do not disparage or misrepresent Slusher Studio, clients, or teammates publicly.

Additional Policies

- **Tagging and Connections**:

    - In certain circumstances, we may request that you refrain from tagging the studio or associating personal accounts with company accounts if the content could reflect poorly on the studio or its clients.

- **Client-Specific Rules**:

    - Be aware that some projects or clients may require stricter policies. When in doubt, ask for clarification from your supervisor before posting.

- **Professional Conduct on Studio Time**:

    - Using phones for social media during downtime is fine, but keep distractions minimal during critical moments like shoots, meetings, or client interactions.

By following these guidelines, we can foster an engaging and professional social media presence while respecting the trust of our clients and the integrity of the studio.

▼ Substance Use Policy

Rocket Launch Studio recognizes that employees' personal lives are their own. However, the safety and well-being of our team, clients, and the overall workplace environment require that all employees report to work in a condition to perform their duties competently and safely.

1. **Prohibited Conduct**

    - Employees must **not** be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, or any other intoxicating substances while on the job, operating Company equipment, driving on Company business, or representing the Company at any event.

    - This includes prescription or over-the-counter medications taken in a manner that negatively impacts job performance or presents a safety risk. If you have a valid prescription that may affect your ability to work, inform management so accommodations can be considered.

2. **Zero Tolerance on the Job**

    - Any employee found to be using, consuming, possessing, or distributing illicit drugs or alcohol during work hours—or arriving to work under the influence—may be subject to disciplinary action, **up to and including immediate termination**.

3. **Off-Duty Conduct**

    - Rocket Launch Studio does not regulate employees' personal activities outside of work. However, any substance use that impairs your performance or judgment at the workplace is strictly prohibited.

4. **Reporting Violations**

    - If you suspect a colleague is under the influence at work, or if you have concerns about your own substance use affecting your role, promptly speak with a manager or HR representative. All reports will be handled discreetly and in accordance with applicable laws.

By adhering to this policy, we ensure a safe, productive, and professional environment for everyone. Violations of this policy are taken seriously and may result in immediate termination or other disciplinary measures.

▼ Late Policy

At Rocket Launch Studio, we value professionalism, accountability, and open communication. We understand that unforeseen circumstances can occasionally cause lateness, whether you're working in person or online. This policy outlines how to handle such situations respectfully and responsibly.

Notifying About Lateness

- If you realize you'll be late:
  - **Notify the team as soon as possible** by messaging in Slack (use the **#team-updates** channel or message your supervisor directly).
  - Include the following in your message:
    - **Estimated time of arrival** (ETA) or an update on whether you can still make it.
    - If you're unable to give an ETA immediately (e.g., stuck in traffic or dealing with an emergency), inform the team of the delay and follow up with more details as soon as possible.

Guidelines for Online Roles

- If you're running late for an online meeting or project start time:
  - Notify the team in Slack with your expected delay.
  - If possible, include any immediate tasks or responsibilities that can be reassigned or addressed by someone else in your absence.

Guidelines for In-Person Roles

- If you're late to an in-person shift, meeting, or event:
  - Send a message via Slack or text/call your supervisor directly, especially if timing is critical (e.g., before a shoot starts).
  - Provide your ETA so the team can adjust accordingly.

Policy on Repeated Lateness

- While we do not operate on a strict "strike" policy, habitual lateness can disrupt team workflows and client satisfaction.
- If lateness becomes a recurring issue:
  - You will first receive a **verbal or written warning** to address the behavior.
  - Continued lateness without improvement may result in further action, including potential termination of your role.

What We Ask

- Communicate openly: Unexpected delays happen, but clear and prompt communication helps the team adjust and stay on track.
- Be proactive: If you know in advance that you'll be late (e.g., due to a conflict or recurring issue), discuss it with your supervisor so arrangements can be made.
- Respect team time: We rely on each other to maintain professionalism, especially during shoots or time-sensitive projects.

▼ Time Off Requests and Policies

At Rocket Launch Studio, we believe in maintaining a healthy work-life balance and understand that time off is essential for rest, recovery, and personal needs. Our goal is to ensure time-off requests are handled smoothly while maintaining the team's workflow.

Requesting Time Off

- Use Slack to request time off by messaging the **#team-updates** channel or sending a direct message to Michael Slusher (CEO) or Zachary Ford (COO).
- Include the following information in your message:
    - The date(s) you'd like to take off.
    - A brief reason if relevant (e.g., vacation, personal day).
    - Any work or responsibilities that may need coverage during your absence.
- Please aim to request time off at least **two weeks in advance** for planned absences to allow time for adjustments.

Calling Out for Sickness or Emergencies

- We understand that sickness or emergencies can arise unexpectedly. In these situations, please notify the team as soon as possible:
    - Send a Slack message to **#team-updates** or directly to Michael Slusher or Zachary Ford.
    - If you cannot access Slack, a quick text or call to your manager works too.
- While there's no set minimum notice for unplanned absences, the sooner we know, the better we can adjust the schedule.

General Guidelines

- We encourage open communication and flexibility around time off. If there are special circumstances or extended absences needed, don't hesitate to have a conversation with Michael or Zachary.
- Time off is an important part of taking care of yourself, and we're here to support you in balancing personal needs with team goals.

Extended Time Off

- **Reasonable Leave**
    - Rocket Launch Studio supports employees who need extended time off for personal, family, or health-related reasons. We aim to ensure employees do not lose their positions due to legitimate extended absences, within logical business constraints.
- **Parental Leave**
    - We offer reasonable parental leave for both mothers and fathers, in line with federal and state laws. Specific details will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the employee's role, availability of cover, and project timelines.
- **Requesting Extended Leave**
    - Employees should provide as much notice as possible when extended time off is needed. Inform your supervisor or HR so we can plan effectively and ensure adequate coverage.

Policies on Resources

▼ Artificial Intelligence Usage Policy

Rocket Launch Studio allows the reasonable and the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to enhance efficiency and productivity. However, the integrity of our work and the trust of our clients must always take priority. Therefore, the following guidelines apply:

Our deliverables and product will NEVER be heavily AI generated or altered. The use of generative AI items as a deliverable is strictly prohibited. We produce and support human made art. AI will only be used as a tool to supplement work when appropriate. If there is any confusion on the allowed usage of AI as a tool, contact leadership before utilizing and AI programs.

1. **Approved Tools and Methods**
   - Employees may only use AI applications or services that are approved by the Company.
   - If you believe a new AI tool could be beneficial, discuss it with management or the appropriate supervisor for approval before use.

2. **Transparency and Disclosure**
   - Any use of AI for tasks such as writing, editing, research, or design should be **disclosed** to the team or client as appropriate.
   - Under no circumstances should AI output be presented as purely human-generated work without disclosure.

3. **Supplement, Don't Replace**
   - AI is considered a **productivity tool**, not a substitute for your role or responsibilities.
   - Employees are still accountable for the quality, originality, and accuracy of their work, even when AI tools are used.

4. **No Dishonest Representation**
   - Using AI to create misleading or fraudulent content, or to represent work in a dishonest manner, is strictly prohibited.
   - Any suspected misuse of AI for deceptive purposes may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

5. **Quality Control and Accuracy**
   - Employees must thoroughly **review and verify** all AI-generated output for factual accuracy, creative integrity, and potential biases.
   - If any errors or misinformation are found, they should be corrected before submitting work to managers, colleagues, or clients.

6. **Confidentiality and Privacy**
   - Do not input any confidential or sensitive client information into AI tools without explicit approval from management, especially if the tool is cloud-based and owned by a third party.
   - Continue to follow the Company's confidentiality protocols when using any AI service.

7. **Consequences of Misuse**
   - Violations of this policy, including using AI in an unapproved manner, failing to disclose AI usage, or producing dishonest or incorrect work, may lead to disciplinary measures, up to and including termination.

By adhering to these guidelines, we ensure that AI enhances our capabilities without compromising the quality and integrity of our work. If you have questions about AI usage or need further guidance, please consult your manager or the HR department.

Performance
▼ **Performance Reviews**

- **Monthly Team/Department Check-Ins**
  - Each team or department will conduct brief performance and progress reviews on a monthly basis. These sessions focus on project status updates, goal setting, and immediate feedback.
- **Quarterly 1:1 Reviews**
  - In addition to monthly team reviews, each employee will have a one-on-one performance review with their supervisor or department head every quarter.
  - These reviews are an opportunity to discuss goals, strengths, areas for improvement, and career development.
- **Documentation and Follow-Up**
  - All performance discussions and goals may be documented. Employees are encouraged to give input on how to improve workflows and achieve both individual and organizational objectives.

Health and Safety
▼ **General Health and Safety**

- **General Safety Practices**
  - Employees must follow standard safety procedures when using equipment, traveling to shoots, or handling potentially hazardous materials.
  - Closed-toe shoes and any required protective gear should be worn on set for safety purposes.
- **Reporting Incidents**
  - Any accidents, injuries, or unsafe conditions must be reported immediately to management.
  - If an employee feels unsafe or unable to continue work due to health or safety concerns, they should inform leadership right away.
- **Well-Being and Support**
  - We encourage employees to take care of their physical and mental health. If you need assistance or accommodation, reach out to HR or leadership so we can explore available resources.

Employee Resources

Anonymous Information Form

If you would like to share information anonymously with the leadership of the company, feel free to fill out this form. Whether it ideas, concerns, or anything else.

Idea Pitch Form

Have an idea for the company? Or a creative project you want help becoming realized with our resources? Feel free to pitch your idea in this form!

▼ Health Resources

Cataloged here is a growing list of resources to help keep everyone happy and healthy mentally and physically. If you have any suggestions on anything to add, please let us know!

Calm App

A mindfulness, meditation and sleep app.

GoodRx

A great resource to find discounts on prescriptions

▼ Professional Development

Here are resources to for your convenience that may serve useful to improve and expand in your role.

Resource A

[Description